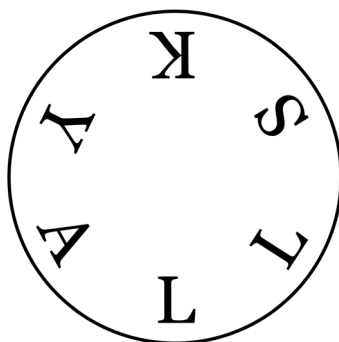


ALL
SKY2

by our faint shadows going before us

by Luke Martin



All Sky publications

An imprint for words, images, sounds, you, me, and all of us

LEGACY SURVEY

engraved on the SAS-A (73'-79')

All sky

All earth

All dirt

All right

All good

Space and time

It all adds up

(the sum of all its parts)

Here and there

All in all

All at once

All done

by our faint shadows going before us
luke martin



all text in italics is from Dorothy Wordsworth's 'Alfoxden Journal', 1798 (*Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth*, Oxford University Press, 1971, ed. by Mary Moorman). the line breaks are mine (her journals are in prose).

the quotations attempt to highlight a certain thread in her entries—themselves understated, stunning miniatures or studies of her surroundings, the woods, the sea, the sky, the moon, as if trying to glimpse the essence of each small thing without needing to be there to glimpse it. i have the sense that each thing stands in its necessity and simultaneously flickers or wobbles without ground. humility and grandeur. after having read this or that passage, each seemingly commonplace, i find myself realizing, several moments later, something had taken my breath away—and that for those moments, somehow beyond my knowledge, i walked without touching the ground, with breath not my own. this is most evident, and most beguiling, when she says, in two entries recounting a walk in the woods by her rural cottage at night: “walked by moonlight” and then, describing the moon at her back, “by our faint shadows going before us.” what is it to have each step guided by, at the same time, your faint shadow and the reflected clarity of moonlight?

after getting this journal at a used book sale out of curiosity, i came across the postcard inside (pictured throughout this text). maybe an unwieldy bookmark. i like to think, though, it was a gift to the next reader, a window. it is, after all, a picture of the woods next to the sea in England, recalling Wordsworth's entries. most of all i like to think of the postcard as an invitation to *correspond*, and i the lucky and anonymous recipient of a blank correspondence. an impulse, moreover, drawn from Wordsworth's own private notes, delicate and straightforward attempts to correspond to the world, to things, to beauty—and written for no one in particular, which is to say, anyone at all.

and so, this text and music is my attempt to continue the correspondence—to, alongside her, and this chanced upon postcard, learn how to *walk by moonlight, by our faint shadows going before us*.

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited,
Brighouse, Yorkshire

AFFIX
STAMP
HERE



AUTUMN IN GLINCROYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the
Lake District

*Join the National Trust and help to preserve the Lake
District*

Information from: Broadlands, Bowness Road, Ambleside

PHONE JOHN WOODWARD



1 K 1

*The shapes of the mist, slowly moving along, exquisitely beautiful;
passing over the sheep they almost seemed to have more of life than those
quiet creatures. The unseen birds singing in the mist.*

*The hawthorn hedges, black and pointed, glittering
from within an envelope of snow and sun, still
beneath our passing gaze.*

*And still beyond the dim horizon
of the distant hills,
hanging as it were
in one undetermined line
between sea and sky.*



The evening cold and clear,
trees mostly bare,
leaves scatter the snow.

*The evening cold and clear.
The sea of a sober grey, streaked by the deeper grey clouds.
The half dead sound of the near sheep bell,
in the hollow of the sloping coombe,
exquisitely soothing.*

The sky spread over with one continuous cloud.

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Bridgwater, Yorkshire

March 1798



We rose early. A thick fog obscured the distant prospect entirely, but the shapes of the nearer trees and the tops of the wood dimly seen and dilated. It cleared away between ten and eleven. The shapes of the mist, slowly moving, were exquisitely beautiful; passing over the sheep they seemed to have more of life than those quiet creatures. I saw birds singing in the mist.

AUTUMN IN GLENCYOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the Lake District.

Join the **Lake District Trust** and help to preserve the Lake District.

Information from: Broadlands, Berrans Road, Ambleside.

PHOTO: JOHN WOOLVERTON

LK-1



*In the deep coombe, as we stood upon the sunless hill,
we saw miles of grass, light and glittering,
and the insects passing.*

The shapes of the Central Stars—

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited
Brigholme, Yorkshire



March 1798

...and white, swelled to the very shores, but
...in the middle. Coleridge returned with me, as
...very bright moonlight night. Venus almost
like another moon. Lost to us at Alfoxden long before she goes
down the large white sea.

AUTUMN IN GLENCYOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the
Lake District.

Join the **National Trust** and help to preserve the Lake
District.

Information from: Broadlands, Berrans Road, Ambleside.

PHOTO: JORDA WOOLVERTON

LK-1



*When I was near Woodlands, the fog overhead became thin,
and I saw the shapes of the Central Stars. Again it closed
and the whole sky was the same.*



The slender notes
drift
the wind
a melody.

January 1798

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited
Brighouse, Yorkshire



became more strongly marked. The withered leaves were
tinted with a deeper yellow, the brighter gloss spotted the
rain, the form became dimmer, the sky flat, and
by distance a white thin cloud. The manufacturer's
strange uncouth howl, which it continues many
times, there is no noise near it but that of the brook. It
is the murmur of the village stream.

AUTUMN IN GLENCOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the
Lake District.

Join the National Trust and help to preserve the Lake
District.

Information from: Broadlands, Borran Road, Ambleside.

PHOTO: JORDA WOOLVERTON

LK-1



30th. *Walked I known not where.*

31st. *Walked.*

1st. *Walked by moonlight.*

A warm day,
the insects passing,
indifferent,
in lines,
beneath a cloud,
beneath the sky,
the sun soft.

The sky flat, unmarked by distances, a white thin cloud.



A faint green
speckling the snow;
the sea very uniform,
of a pale greyish blue;
and the empty trees tangle
before the clouds—
crowns upon the
grey, shifting sky.

**AFFIX
STAMP
HERE**



January 1798. The evening cold and clear. The sea of a sober grey, marked by the deeper grey clouds. The half dead sound of the sea sheep-bell, in the hollow of the sloping coombe, exquisite soothing.

AUTUMN IN GLENCYOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the Lake District.
Join the National Trust and help to preserve the Lake District.

Information from: Broadlands, Berrans Road, Ambleside.
 PHOTO: JORDY WOOLVERTON [K.1]



Venus almost like another moon.

Lost to us at Alfoxden long before she goes down the large white sea.



Walked I know not where—

Walked.

(Walked by moonlight)

*Returned alone; a fine sunny, clear, frosty day.
The sea still, and blue, and broad, and smooth.*

The unseen birds singing in the mist.
The mist
as if
mute.

*I never saw such a union of earth, sky, and sea.
The clouds beneath our feet spread themselves to the water,
and the clouds of the sky almost joined them.*

Gathered sticks in the wood; a perfect stillness.

The dell romantic and beautiful.
The sky, open and wide.

*The sky spread over with one continuous cloud,
whitened by the light of the moon, which, though her dim shape was seen,
did not throw forth so strong a light as to chequer the earth with shadows.*

*At once the clouds seemed to cleave asunder,
and left her in the centre of a black-blue vault.
She sailed along, followed by multitudes of stars, small, and bright, and sharp.*

Their brightness seemed concentrated, (half-moon).

The late afternoon sun,
the hollies shining.

*The hawthorn hedges, black and pointed, glittering
with millions of diamond drops;*

*the hollies shining
with broader patches of light.*

It is morning.
Heavy and wet,
and melting.
All is beautiful
and thick
and pressing upon the world.
Between rivulets in the disappearing snow—
windows, windows, windows.
The shapes of the mist
come and go,
come and go.

*By our faint shadows
going before us*



The half dead sound—

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited
Brighton, Yorkshire

March 1798



THE ORIGIN I WISHED TO SEE. Coleridge in the evening of 1798
went with me to the wood. Coleridge very ill. It was a mild
pleasant afternoon but the evening became very foggy when
I was near Woodlands the fog overhead became thin and I
saw the shape of the Central Star. Again it closed and the
whole sky was the same.

AVENUE IN GLENCOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the
Lake District.

Join the National Trust and help to preserve the Lake
District.

Information from: Broadlands, Berrans Road, Ambleside.
PHOTO: JOHN WOOLVERTON



*Quaint waterfalls about, about which
Nature was very successfully striving to make beautiful
what art had deformed—ruins, hermitages, etc., etc.*

*In spite of all these things, the dell romantic and beautiful,
though everywhere planted with unnaturalised trees.*

*Happily we cannot shape the huge hills,
or carve out the valleys according to our fancy.*



The sea of a sober grey.

Lining its edge,
the snow—
little by little,
touching the clouds.

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited
Brighouse, Yorkshire



February 1968

On a pleasant morning, the near prospect clear. The ridges of the hills fringed with wood, showing the sea through them like the white sky, and still beyond the dim horizon of the distant hills, hanging as it were in one undetermined line between sea and sky.

AUTUMN IN GLENCYOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the Lake District.

Join the National Trust and help to preserve the Lake District.

Information from: Broadlands, Barrans Road, Ambleside.

PHOTO: JON WOLVERTON



*The sea very uniform,
of a pale greyish blue,
only one distant bay,
bright and blue as a sky;
had there been a vessel sailing up it,
a perfect image of delight.*

And as it was before my arrival,
the sea still, and blue, and broad, and smooth.

February 1998

Printed by
Colin Richardson Printers Limited
Brighton, Yorkshire



walked to Mr. Barrowclough's, and to Stowey. We returned, and we walked through the wood into the Cumber to fetch some eggs. The sun shone bright and clear. A deep stillness in the thickest part of the wood, undisturbed except by the occasional dropping of the snow from the holly boughs; no other sound but that of the water, and the slender notes of a redbreast, which sang at intervals on the outskirts of the southern side of the wood. There the bright green moss was bare at the roots of the trees, and the little birds were upon it. The whole appearance of the wood was enchanting; and each tree, taken singly, was beautiful. The branches of the hollies pendent with

AUTUMN IN GLENCYOYNE WOOD on Ullswater in the Lake District.

Join the National Trust and help to preserve the Lake District.

Information from: Broadlands, Berrans Road, Ambleside.

Photo: JOHN WOOLVERTON



*The sun shone bright and clear. A deep stillness in the thickest part of the wood,
undisturbed except by the occasional dropping of snow
from the holly boughs;*

*no other sound but that of the water, and the slender notes
of a redbreast, which sang at intervals
on the outskirts of the northern side of the wood.*



The sky flat, unmarked;
our footprints, too, in the softening ground.

by our faint shadows going before us (score)
for 3 or more people

When I was near Woodlands, the fog overhead became thin,
and I saw the shapes of the Central Stars. Again it closed,
and the whole sky was the same.

30th. Walked I know not where.

31st. Walked.

1st. Walked by moonlight.

*

four short melodies, played quietly, slowly.

octaves free, staves in treble clef, pitches as 'zones' (i.e., within a semitone)

melody IV is played only once, in the middle of the piece, *tutti* and at written pitch.

melodies I, II, and III are wandered between, individually, throughout the rest of the piece.

where there are dyads or triads in a melody, any number may be played.

where there is an 'X', any sound may be played, or a silence.

their position on the staff has no bearing.

melody IV

21'20" – 23'40" *tutti*, each note = -4" (the melody repeats 5 times)

note lengths should be felt as a group and are approximately 4" per note.

after melody IV you may continue where you left off or return to the beginning of melody I, II, or III.

melodies I, II, III

0'00" – 21'20" & 23'40" – 45'00"

begin on any melody and with either method.

perhaps once or twice, at any point, a long silence

(after which, continue where you left off).

two methods. neither strikingly distinct from the other.

1. a note every 30", each between -4" – 30" in duration.
for ex: if at 5'30", then the note begins at 5'30" and ends between -5'34" and 6'00".
2. notes played freely, though generally slowly and with space.

melodies repeat *ad infinitum*—

each played in full before repeating or shifting between melodies.

an optional pause if repeating the same; a pause if shifting between.

methods may change only after a melody has been played in full.

0'00" – 21'20" & 23'40" – 45'00"
octaves free

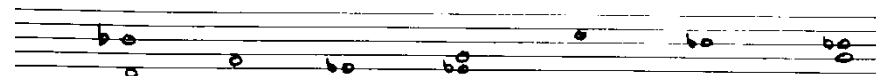
octaves free

The second system of musical notation for 'The Bird Song' consists of two staves. The upper staff contains a single note, a half note G4, marked with an 'X' above it. The lower staff contains a sequence of notes: a half note G3, a half note F3, a half note E3, a half note D3, a half note C3, a half note B2, a half note A2, and a half note G2. The notes are written in a simple, child-friendly style with stems and flags.

[illegible]

21'20" - 23'40"

at pitch



by our faint shadows going before us

by Luke Martin

Track list:

1. by our faint shadows going before us (60:12)

Credits:

Composed by Luke Martin

Performed by Short Americans

Luke Martin	guitar
Noah Ophoven-Baldwin	cornet
Max Wanderman	accordion
Adam Zahller	guitar

Recorded in Minneapolis, Minnesota, US (Spring 2023)

Mixed and mastered by Luke Damrosch

Note on the recording:

this version of the piece is ‘doubled’. we (Short Americans) made two recordings, one outside and one inside—each 45 minutes. we did the outside recording as a quartet and the inside individually. ‘out’ and ‘in’ were then overlaid and offset by 15 minutes: outside, 0’ – 45’; inside, 15’ – 60’.